

Planning and Zoning Board and City Commission Public Hearing Comments

Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School - Change in Land Use, Conditional Use and Site Plan Review Applications -
624 Anastasia Avenue (University Baptist Church), Coral Gables, Florida

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
76.	03 21 11	Val Gelnovatch vgelnovatch@tfgnet.com			X	<p>March 20, 2011</p> <div> <div> Mr. Eric Riel, Jr. Planning Director City of Coral Gables 405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor Coral Gables, FL 33134 </div> <div> Ms. Carmen Olazabal Building & Zoning Director City of Coral Gables 405 Biltmore Way, 3rd Floor Coral Gables, FL 33134 </div> </div> <p>Re: Opposition to Proposed Change of Land Use</p> <p>Dear Mr. Riel and Ms. Olazabal:</p> <p>As a resident of the City of Coral Gables, I want to express my opposition to the proposed change of land use being sought by Somerset Academy Gables/Academica.</p> <p>The proposed change of land use being sought by Somerset Academy Gables/Academica is in direct violation of the language and intent of the 1968 Covenant that runs with the land, as well as its subsequent 1977 Ordinance, which limits to property use to Nursery School and Mother's Day Out Program of not more than 110 children.</p> <p>The sought designation, "Community Facility," has never been used in the city of Coral Gables and would be a novel and untested experiment in the middle of a residential neighborhood.</p> <p>I strongly urge you to vote against the proposed change in land use.</p> <p>Please note, I am not asking you to oppose a charter school in Coral Gables, nor am I asking you to oppose Somerset Academy. Rather I urge you to vote against the proposed change in land use at the site in which the school is currently proposing to expand. If there is a current land use somewhere else within Coral Gables already set up to handle the size and needs of the school including traffic, parking etc, (without a land use change), and those surrounding residents support a charter school on that available land, then I would urge you to consider supporting that option, should that be available.</p> <p>Sincerely yours, Val Gelnovatch</p>
77.	03 21 11	Evita Francuz 3419 Anderson Road		X		



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		Coral Gables, FL gfrancuz@comcast.net				
78.	03 21 11	Barry Golden and Judith Castro-Golden MD 3628 Harlano Street Judithgolden@bellsouth.net		X		As long as enrollment is for children, who live within the City of Coral Gables. Having moved to Coral Gables 6 years ago and not being able to enroll my children in an appropriate public school was frustrating. We need good schools, especially middle and highs schools, for our children in Coral Gables. Will not agree to the added traffic of children not living in Coral Gables.
79.	03 21 11	Silvia Perez Christopher King Stlph@hotmail.com			X	
80.	03 21 11	Gables Mayfair LLC 449 Anastasia souviron@bellsouth.net			X	735 students plus staff, Youth Center, Library, the traffic, noise, 735 students is not a good sign for the neighborhood.
81.	03 21 11	Maggie Guajardo Kurtz 718 Malaga Avenue Coral Gables, Florida 33134 maggie.kurtz@cushwake.com			X	<p>From: Maggie Kurtz [mailto:Maggie.Kurtz@cushwake.com] Sent: Monday, March 21, 2011 2:34 PM To: Riel, Eric Subject: FW: Somerset - Baptist United Church - upcoming zoning</p> <p>We have been residents on the same block for 26 years. We knew what was surrounding us and we had no problem with the Church, Youth Center and some apartment buildings. We feel the church and the City should abide by the Covenant and Ordinance that was made back in 1977 stating that "the property will be held as one tract, and not be leased or rented (separately)." University Baptist was specifically set up as a pre-kindergarten Nursery School and Mother's Day Out Program run by the Church.</p> <p>We feel the church and the City should abide by the Covenant and Ordinance that was made back in 1977 stating that "the property will be held as one tract, and not be leased or rented (separately)." It was specifically set up as a pre-kindergarten Nursery School and Mother's Day Out Program run by the Church. Somerset/Academica, as you know, went to court against the city to challenge this and lost. Why are we now considering modifying the zoning?</p> <p>We are obviously against this change and very disappointed that the city has allowed this to go as far as it has. Where Somerset got the idea they can come in and change the zoning as they are trying to do is beyond comprehension. It is vitally important that they do not make a zoning change for University Baptist Church.</p> <p>Many thanks Maggie Guajardo Kurtz 718 Malaga Avenue Coral Gables, Florida 33134 maggie.kurtz@cushwake.com tel 305.371.4411 fax 305.375.0056</p>

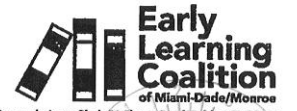
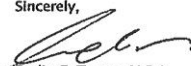
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82.	03 21 11	Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A. President & CEO Early Learning Coalition		X ¹		<div>  <p>2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd. 5th Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134 Tel: (305) 646-7220 Fax: (305) 447-1608 Web: www.elcmdm.org</p> </div> <p>2010 - 2011 Board of Directors Chair Octavio A. Verdeja Jr. Vice Chair Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D. Treasurer Yessenia Perkins Secretary Gerald K. Schwartz, Esq. Directors Modesto E. Abety Magaly Abrahante, Ed.D. Daniel Armstrong, Ph.D. Roderick E. Beasley Connie Chapell Jacqui B. Colyer Cortes-Suarez, Ed.D. Alan Eckstein, Esq. Shaleen Fagundo David Lawrence Jr. The Hon. Cindy S. Lederman, J.D. Jane W. McQueen Harve A. Mogul P. Morgan Hill Lucy C. Piñero, Esq. The Hon. Natacha Seljas Ann-Karen Weller, R.N., B.S.N. David Williams Jr. President & CEO Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A.</p> <p>February 3, 2011</p> <p>The Honorable Maria Anderson City of Coral Gables 405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor Coral Gables, FL 33134</p> <p>Dear Commissioner Anderson:</p> <p>As a member of the Coral Gables business community, I am writing this letter in support of Somerset Gables. The Somerset schools add value to communities, children and families. I can personally attest to this because my eight year old son attends Somerset South Miami.</p> <p>Somerset schools are good neighbors, have considerable parental involvement, are accountable to all stakeholders, and consistently achieve excellent academic outcomes for children. If demand - as evidenced by the long waiting lists - at the other Somerset schools is any indication, there should be no doubt that parents embrace the Somerset learning model. Parents want and children need Somerset Gables.</p> <p>Allowing children to receive a high-quality education in their community is one of their most basic rights. This right should not be denied for any reason. Neighborhood schools are part of the American fabric and something we must continue to support for the sake of our children and the future of our communities and our country. Somerset Gables should be a source of pride for the neighborhood and the city, not an inconvenience.</p> <p>I am available to speak on behalf of the Somerset schools at any time. I request that you provide your full support to the expansion of Somerset Gables.</p> <p>Thank you for your public service.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>  <p>Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A. President & CEO</p> <p>About the Early Learning Coalition: The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is one of the largest non-profits in Miami-Dade. The Coalition serves as an education funder and adds \$185 million in federal, state, and private funding to the local economy annually. The Coalition's mission is to promote high-quality school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society.</p>


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84.	03 21 11	Maria Rodriguez-Mena Coral Gables Neighborhood School Alliance		X		<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>CORAL GABLES Neighborhood School Alliance</p> </div> <p><i>Dear Friends and Neighbors:</i></p> <p>We want to thank everyone who attended the recent informational meeting about Somerset Gables, held at University Baptist Church. We appreciated the honest and fair dialogue. As a neighbor, supporter of the school, and member of the newly-formed Coral Gables Neighborhood School Alliance, I want to communicate on behalf of the new Alliance why Somerset Gables is so important to our community, as well as share some facts that may still be unclear.</p> <p>For those neighbors who took the opportunity to tour University Baptist's facilities, I am sure you will agree that space is more than adequate to meet the needs of the proposed student body.</p> <p>The total number of students Somerset Gables seeks for the proposed K-8 public charter school, inclusive of the already-open pre-school, is 735 students. There were some who thought the number exceeded 1,000, but that is not accurate.</p> <p>As members of the Alliance, we are also neighbors and certainly want the area minimally impacted. As the most discussed topic at the meeting was traffic, one of the speakers did convey that a traffic study was conducted by a seasoned traffic engineering firm with significant educational facilities experience.</p> <p>The study found that University Baptist's facilities can accommodate up to 735 students arriving and dismissing in two and three shifts, respectively. This mean that cars will not affect the adjacent streets during the school's drop off and pick up times.</p> <p>It was also apparent at the meeting that many of the parents who wish to enroll their children at Somerset Gables – should approval for additional students be realized from the City of Coral Gables – plan to walk to the school.</p> <p>As charter schools are allowed to limit enrollment to students residing within a reasonable distance of a school, a vast majority of Somerset Gables students would live minutes from the facility. This not only further mitigates traffic, but lends itself to a true neighborhood school, much like we all yearn for.</p> <p>We desire the best public school education for our children. Many of us with school age children moved to or remain in Coral Gables for that reason. Unfortunately, the two closest public elementary schools in our neighborhood – Coral Gables Elementary and Sunset Elementary – are beyond full capacity. An additional public elementary school in our community, especially one with such a stellar reputation, is an absolute need.</p> <p>We encourage Coral Gables residents and those interested in learning more about Somerset Gables to visit the school's website (www.somersetgables.com). Should you have any questions or are interested in joining the Coral Gables Neighborhood School Alliance, please email us at gablesalliance@gmail.com.</p> <p>We thank you for your interest in public education.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p><i>Mara Rodriguez-Mena</i> Coral Gables Neighborhood School Alliance</p>

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85.	03 21 11	Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A. President & CEO Early Learning Coalitin		X ¹		<div>  <p>2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd. 5th Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134 Tel: (305) 646-7220 Fax: (305) 447-1608 Web: www.elcmidm.org</p> </div> <p>2010 - 2011 Board of Directors Chair Octavio A. Verdeja Jr. Vice Chair Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D. Treasurer Yessenia Perkins Secretary Gerald K. Schwartz, Esq. Directors Modesto E. Abety Magaly Abrahante, Ed.D. Daniel Armstrong, Ph.D. Roderick E. Beasley Connie Chapell Jacqui B. Colyer Cortes-Suarez, Ed.D. Alan Eckstein, Esq. Shaleen Fagundo David Lawrence Jr. The Hon. Cindy S. Lederman, J.D. Jane W. McQueen Harve A. Mogul P. Morgan Hill Lucy C. Pifello, Esq. The Hon. Natacha Seljas Ann-Karen Weller, R.N., B.S.N. David Williams Jr. President & CEO Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A.</p> <p>February 3, 2011</p> <p>The Honorable Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr. City of Coral Gables 405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor Coral Gables, FL 33134</p> <p>Dear Commissioner Cabrera:</p> <p>As a member of the Coral Gables business community, I am writing this letter in support of Somerset Gables. The Somerset schools add value to communities, children and families. I can personally attest to this because my eight year old son attends Somerset South Miami.</p> <p>Somerset schools are good neighbors, have considerable parental involvement, are accountable to all stakeholders, and consistently achieve excellent academic outcomes for children. If demand - as evidenced by the long waiting lists - at the other Somerset schools is any indication, there should be no doubt that parents embrace the Somerset learning model. Parents want and children need Somerset Gables.</p> <p>Allowing children to receive a high-quality education in their community is one of their most basic rights. This right should not be denied for any reason. Neighborhood schools are part of the American fabric and something we must continue to support for the sake of our children and the future our communities and our country. Somerset Gables should be a source of pride for the neighborhood and the city, not an inconvenience.</p> <p>I am available to speak on behalf of the Somerset schools at any time. I request that you provide your full support to the expansion of Somerset Gables.</p> <p>Thank you for your public service.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p> Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A. President & CEO</p> <p>About the Early Learning Coalition: The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is one of the largest non-profits in Miami-Dade. The Coalition serves as an education funder and adds \$185 million in federal, state, and private funding to the local economy annually. The Coalition's mission is to promote high-quality school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society.</p>


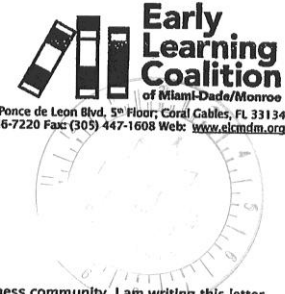
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86.	03 21 11	Thomas C. Whitmoyer VP, Brand Managing Director Bacardi USA, Inc.		X		 <p>BACARDI U.S.A., INC.</p> <p>January 11, 2011</p> <p>City of Coral Gables Commission</p> <p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I am writing to you in support of Somerset Academy Coral Gables' petition to expand their enrollment.</p> <p>I recently moved to Coral Gables from Westchester County, New York to assume an Executive position at Bacardi USA, Inc. In my short time here, I have been consistently impressed with the high quality of life in Coral Gables. Coral Gables offers a unique combination of natural beauty, a diverse community, rich cultural options and a vibrant business sector.</p> <p>However, as the parents of two small children, the educational opportunities are the most important factor in our decision of where to permanently re-locate our family. While researching the educational options in Coral Gables, we came into contact with Somerset Academy Gables.</p> <p>We have been extremely impressed with Somerset Academy Gables' innovative approach to education. The innovative learning environment, the use of advanced learning technology and the opportunity for students to pursue a dual language track are three factors that make the school truly unique. Meanwhile, the demonstrated commitment of the teachers, students and parents to advancing the school's mission is inspiring and contributes to the unique learning environment. Finally, Somerset Academy Gables' commitment to being a neighborhood school is a compelling proposition for parents such as us who believe that attending a neighborhood school is highly beneficial both for our children's development and for building strong communities.</p> <p>We would very much like to purchase a home and build a new life for our family in Coral Gables. Given that an increased enrollment at Somerset Academy Gables would enhance our chances of obtaining a place for our children at the school, we ask that you approve the school's petition for an expanded enrollment.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this letter and for your dedication to ensuring that Coral Gables continues to be a wonderful place to raise a family.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>  <p>Thomas C. Whitmoyer Vice President, Brand Managing Director Rum Bacardi USA, Inc.</p> <p>BACARDI - THE WORLD'S GREAT RUMS</p> <p>2701 LE JEUNE ROAD, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA 33134 TEL: (305) 573-8511 FAX: (305) 573-0756 <small>BACARDI AND THE BAT DEVICE ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF BACARDI & COMPANY LIMITED</small></p>


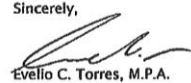
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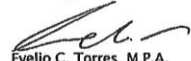
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89.	03 21 11	Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A. President & CEO Early Learning Coalition		X ¹		 <p>2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd. 5th Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134 Tel: (305) 646-7220 Fax: (305) 447-1608 Web: www.elcmm.com</p> <p>2010 - 2011 Board of Directors February 3, 2011</p> <p>Chair Octavio A. Verdeja Jr.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yvonne T. Johnson, M.D.</p> <p>Treasurer Yessenia Perkins</p> <p>Secretary Gerald K. Schwartz, Esq.</p> <p>Directors Modesto E. Abety</p> <p>Magaly Abrahante, Ed.D.</p> <p>Daniel Armstrong, Ph.D.</p> <p>Roderick E. Beasley</p> <p>Connie Chapell</p> <p>Jacqui B. Colyer</p> <p>1 Cortes-Suarez, Ed.D.</p> <p>Alan Eckstein, Esq.</p> <p>Shaleen Fagundo</p> <p>David Lawrence Jr.</p> <p>The Hon. Cindy S. Lederman, J.D.</p> <p>Jane W. McQueen</p> <p>Harve A. Mogul</p> <p>P. Morgan Hill</p> <p>Lucy C. Piñeiro, Esq.</p> <p>The Hon. Natacha Seljas</p> <p>Ann-Karen Weller, R.N., B.S.N.</p> <p>David Williams Jr.</p> <p>President & CEO Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A.</p> <p>The Honorable Wayne E. "Chip" Withers City of Coral Gables 405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor Coral Gables, FL 33134</p> <p>Dear Commissioner Withers:</p> <p>As a member of the Coral Gables business community, I am writing this letter in support of Somerset Gables. The Somerset schools add value to communities, children and families. I can personally attest to this because my eight year old son attends Somerset South Miami.</p> <p>Somerset schools are good neighbors, have considerable parental involvement, are accountable to all stakeholders, and consistently achieve excellent academic outcomes for children. If demand - as evidenced by the long waiting lists - at the other Somerset schools is any indication, there should be no doubt that parents embrace the Somerset learning model. Parents want and children need Somerset Gables.</p> <p>Allowing children to receive a high-quality education in their community is one of their most basic rights. This right should not be denied for any reason. Neighborhood schools are part of the American fabric and something we must continue to support for the sake of our children and the future our communities and our country. Somerset Gables should be a source of pride for the neighborhood and the city, not an inconvenience.</p> <p>I am available to speak on behalf of the Somerset schools at any time. I request that you provide your full support to the expansion of Somerset Gables.</p> <p>Thank you for your public service.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>  <p>Evelio C. Torres, M.P.A. President & CEO</p> <p>About the Early Learning Coalition: The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is one of the largest non-profits in Miami-Dade. The Coalition serves as an education funder and adds \$185 million in federal, state, and private funding to the local economy annually. The Coalition's mission is to promote high-quality school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society.</p>

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90.	03 22 11	Paula King 720 Escobar Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134			X	<p>RECEIVED 2011 MAR 18 AM 8:50 CITY OF CORAL GABLES</p> <p>CITY OF CORAL GABLES PLANNING DEPARTMENT 2011 MAR 22 AM 8:11</p> <p>720 Escobar Ave. Coral Gables FL 33134 March 15, 2011</p> <p>Ms. Carmen Olazabal Building and Zoning Director City of Coral Gables 405 Biltmore Way, 3rd Floor Coral Gables, FL 33134</p> <p>Dear Ms Olazabal,</p> <p>As a long term resident of the City of Coral Gables, I want to express my opposition to the proposed change of land use being sought by Somerset Academy Gables/Academica.</p> <p>I believe that the proposed change of land use being south by Somerset Academy Gables/Academica is in direct violation of the language and intent of the 1968 covenant that runs with the land, as well as its subsequent 1977 Ordinance, which limits the property use to nursery school and a mother's day out program of not more than 110 children.</p> <p>The sought designation, "Community Facility," has never been used in the city of Coral Gables and would be a novel and untested experiment in the middle of a residential neighborhood.</p> <p>I ask that you vote against the proposed change.</p> <p>Sincerely,  Paula King</p> <p>720 Escobar Ave. Coral Gables, FL 33134 305.788.3203</p>
91.	03 22 11	Franciso Porro 627 Aledo Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33149			X	I do not want EXCESSIVE traffic in my neighborhood; a school w/700 children, I can assure you the traffic will be caotic! I pay my taxes for a quiet beautiful lovely neighborhood – Lets keep it that way!
92.	03 22 11	Frances Reese 746 Malaga Avenue			X	

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		Coral Gables, FL frannyreese@yahoo.com				
93.	03 22 11	Jennifer Kaufman 1805 Ferdinand Street Coral Gables, FL 33134			X	
94.	03 22 11	Carol Ann Lane 880 San Pedro Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33156 carolalane@bellsouth.net			X	
95.	03 21 11	John G. & Pamela A. Admire 730 San Esteban Avenue Coral Gables, FL Scarlet107@aol.com			X	
96.	03 21 11	Susan J. Stanton 931 San Pedro Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33156 spstanton@comcast.net			X	
97.	03 21 11	Jose A. & Miriam R. Garcia 840 Anastasia Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 Mika0331@aol.com				We will be directly impacted by any change of this area and ordinance of use. As we have stated before we want my City to grow its commerce and remain the City Beautiful. Our schools are good schools and we do not need additional institutions as such. Our existing schools need the same handouts that private entities are receiving from our government. Support our system of education.
98.	03 21 11	Ernesto & Beatriz Guerra 3665 Toledo Street Coral Gables, FL 33134 BDguerra@att.net		X		We believe that the school expansion is beneficial & necessary for the neighborhood and will not negatively impact traffic or other quality of life issues.
99.	03 22 11	Michael Mariutto 3703 Segovia Street Coral Gables, FL mgmitalia@gmail.com			X	This is a residential neighborhood, and it is absolutely NOT appropriate to have a school of this size in our quiet & peaceful community. The street & the infrastructure were not designed for this usage, and it should NOT be allowed in this area.
100.	03 22 11	Graciela Rodriguez 615 Santander Avenue Unit E Coral Gables, FL 33134 chelafranco@aol.com			X	I object to having a charter school at the above address because first and foremost, it will devalue the properties surrounding, it will create traffic and interfere with parking in the surrounding areas. I moved to this area because of the quietness it offered, not to be next to a charter school that would cater well over 700 students.
101.	03 23 11	Thor W. Bruce 3252 Riviera Drive Thor.bruce@comcast.net			X	1. Excessively broad - includes too many uses. 2. Protective covenants don't work. City of Coral Gables does not enforce existing covenant prohibiting UBC from renting its facilities. 3. Bad precedent – too many similar situated properties. 4. Traffic problems – Take a look at Little Flower School.
102.	03 23 11	Adalis and Francisco Garcia 3131 Segovia Street			X	The news that the Somerset Academy will be occupy the University Baptist Church premises located on Segovia Street and Anastasia Ave was received with disbelief and profound discontent. Disbelieve that the city commissioners would consider and would even allow a

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		Coral Gables, FL 33134				school and significantly change the use and impact of traffic on our neighborhood. Segovia Street cannot tolerate more traffic congestion. This is a substantial change in use that will impact the neighbors very negatively. If you open the door to this 'experiment' it will be difficult to contain the school. We need less density no more.
103.	03 23 11	Robert A. & Robin V. Burr 314 Romano Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 Robin.burr@gmail.com			X	
104.	03 23 11	Dr. & Mrs. Octavio B. Carreno 919 Escobar Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134			X	We admire and congratulate the Somerset Grace Academy Charter School for the records achieved as a high performing school for 14 yrs. We believe they should continue such a magnificent work BUT AT A DIFFERENT ADDRESS away from a residential City that already has, other schools, the Biltmore Hotel etc in the middle of our tranquility – We strongly oppose the new plan to accommodate 735 students as it is applied for.
105.	03 23 11	Robert L. Hatfield & Judith E. Hatfield 3400 Anderson Road Coral Gables, FL 33134 jjofcg@bellsouth.net			X	We believe it is not only a mistake but it is wrong to amend the Future Land Use map to change to Community Services & Facilities to enable the applicants to secure a change that would not have been permitted except for this backdoor maneuver to cram this bloated school down the throats of the neighbors. This is strictly a power plan by well funded special interests (backed by the parents of students to be, who want a good school no matter where it is located) who are able to out flank a weak & vacillating commission.

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106.	03 23 11	Mr. & Mrs. Jose Lara 3145 Segovia Street Coral Gables, FL 33134 mlara@doshealthcare.com			X	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">City of Coral Gables Courtesy Public Hearing Notice Comment Form</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Application: 07-10-113-P</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Request: Change of Land Use, Conditional Use and Site Plan Review - Somerset Grace Academy Charter School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Location: 624 Anastasia Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida</p> </div> <p>Date: <u>March 17, 2011</u></p> <p>I, or We, <u>Mr & Mrs Jose Lara</u></p> <p>Mailing address: <u>3145 Segovia St, Coral Gables, FL 33134</u></p> <p>Email <u>mlara @doshealthcare.com</u></p> <p>Please provide any comments below (attach additional pages as necessary):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have no comment, or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do not object to this application, or</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do hereby object.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">CITY OF CORAL GABLES PLANNING DEPARTMENT 2011 MAR 23 PM 4:13</p> <p><u>See note enclosed</u></p> <p>The news that the Somerset Academy will be occupying the University Baptist Church premises located on Segovia Street and Anastasia Ave was received with disbelief and profound discontent. Disbelieve that the city commissioners would consider and would even allow a school and significantly change the use and impact of traffic on our neighborhood. Segovia Street cannot tolerate more traffic congestion. This is a substantial change in use that will impact the neighbors very negatively. If you open the door to this "experiment" it will be difficult to contain the school. We need less density not more.</p> <p>Our beautiful Segovia Street that should be kept and improved as a boulevard with plants-ornate mediums along the street and even an additional circle on that corner and not be disrupted with the increased traffic and neighbors disturbance that brings an school to the surrounding.</p> <p>WE APPEAL TO YOUR SENSE OF FAIRNESS AND CONSIDERATION TO THE CORAL GABLES RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA AND NOT ALLOW THE SCHOOL ON THIS BEAUTIFUL PART OF OUR CITY BEAUTIFUL.</p> <p>THE LARA'S FAMILY 3145 Segovia Street</p>
107.	03 25 11	Kemal Rajib & Ann Rajib 6901 Capilla Street Coral Gables, FL 33146			X	Zone laws are designed to protect property owenr amendments made for special intensity should not be permitted without approval of the tax payers (all)
108.	03 28 11	Eileen R. Smith 706 Palermo Avenue Eileenrs@bellsouth.net			X	Expansion of Somerset will bring numerous cars to Segovia Avenue and adjoining streets. The back-up of cars waiting during drop off and pick-up times will cause delays for commuters. The elegant and stately avenue that is now Segovia will look like an inner-city traffic jam. School activities during the day, evenings, and weekends will also bring about the chaotic congestion when 735 families attend. Contributing to even more congestion will be the lining up of school buses or "kid movers". The noise and exhaust that will be

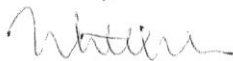
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						generated by the car line are other factors that will erode the tranquility of our residential streets. Delivery trucks coming and going will also contribute to even more disruption. Another problem comes about when cars park on the lawns of adjacent homes when the school's parking lot is full. These residential will find themselves frequently replacing sections of their lawn since even a brief, sudden downpour will make it wasy for cars to tear up the grass as they come and go. I STRONGLY OBJECT TO THIS EXPANSION.
109.	03 28 11	Obie T. Smith 706 Palermo Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 obiesmith@bellsouth.net			X	The church, University Baptist, has been at that location for quite a few years. Demographically, most of its members come from outside Coral Gables. So the church isn't serving needs of the Coral Gables community. The Somerset Charter School wants to use church property, tax-free, to educate children who do not live in Coral Gables. The traffic, at critical times in the day, will be extreme for the neighborhood (I live 5 blocks from the Church). With the scheduled reduction in traffic lanes on Segovia, the traffic will be that much worse for residents. Given the restricted environs in the neighborhood, this does not bode well for residents in the Country Club section of Coral Gables. Somerset says a pre-school on its own is not viable. It wants to offer classes through 8 th grade. How many years will it be before Somerset then expands to offer classes through 12 th grade? This project is like cancer. If not treated aggressively, it will progressively erode the quality of residential life in the surrounding neighborhoods.
110.	03 28 11	Margarita Alvarez 3410 LeJeune Road eddiealvarez@att.net			X	I reside at 3410 Le Jeune Rd. I totally <u>Object</u> to the expansion of the school. Traffic would become difficult and streets would be blocked to accommodate the in and out of the school. Also schools tend to have children hanging out on the streets. Thank you, Margarita Alvarez
111.	03 28 11	Ana Arango Alvarez 3412 Le Jeune Road Ama-ea@att.net			X	I live at 3412 Le Jeune Rd. I object to the school expansion. Traffic would increase n the neighborhood and streets would get blocked. Also a hazard for children on a main road (Segovia). Thank you, Ana Arango Alvarez
112.	03 28 11	Martin G. Cerda 511 Cadima Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134			X	Dear Sir Or Madame, Please see the attached letter voicing our concern regading the proposed changes related to the University Baptist Church parcel of land in my neighborhood and kindly confirm receipt. Thank you,

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						<p>March 28, 2011</p> <p>City of Coral Gables Planning Department 405 Biltmore Way Coral Gables, FL 33134</p> <p>Dear Sir or Madame:</p> <p>My family and I strongly oppose the proposed expansion of Somerset Grace Charter School of Coral Gables. We have lived in the same home in this neighborhood for the past 19 years and it is clear to me that the area cannot support a school with up to a maximum of 735 students.</p> <p>The quality of life in this area is already adversely affected by the near proximity of Coral Gables High School, Youth Center, Coral Gables Library, and University Baptist Church.</p> <p>Frankly, I am disappointed that University Baptist Church has decided to expand and/or revise its role and purpose in our community after the patience many in our neighborhood have demonstrated over the years with the traffic and parking situation.</p> <p>In addition, I do not see the need for another school in the area. I have two teenagers at a private high school right now who also attended private lower and middle schools and know for sure that I would not have used such a proposed school even if within walking distance, for it does not meet the academic standard and heritage available to us at nearby private schools.</p> <p>Again, we strongly oppose the applications submitted and urge our city leaders to deny this request for the sake of the quality of life in the neighborhood and because we do not need another school in the area.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>  <p>Martin G. Cerda 511 Cadima Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134</p>
113.	03 28 11	Dominique Stauffer 625 Malaga Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 Dominique96@line.com			X	
114.	03 29 11	Sandra Murado			X	<p>From: Sandra Murado <sandra@muradolaw.com> Date: March 29, 2011 6:58:52 AM GMT-04:00 To: eriel@coralgables.com Subject: OPPOSITION TO ZONING CHANGE ON UBC PROPERTY Mr. Riel:</p>

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						<p>My name is Sandra Murado and I, on behalf of my family, who reside in Coral Gables, wish to express OUR ABSOLUTE OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE being considered for the property on which University Baptist Church is situated.</p> <p>My family and I do not live in the vicinity of the school, but will be directly impacted by any change of zoning on that property, since in the end, it affects all City of Coral Gables residents and the community at large.</p> <p>I will be at the upcoming April 27, 2011 and plan to present all of my reasons for such a drastic and unnecessary change to the Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>Sandra I. Murado, Attorney Law Offices of Sandra I. Murado, P.A. 901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Suite 504 Coral Gables, Florida 33134 Tel. (305) 448-4300 Fax (305) 448-0600 www.muradolaw.com</p>
115.	03 29 11	Patricia H. Clarke Julio M. Clarke 1001 Sunset Drive Coral Gables, FL 33143 plhclarke@aol.com			X	<p>From: "Patricia H. Clarke" <plhclarke@aol.com> Date: March 29, 2011 7:51:58 AM GMT-04:00 To: "colazabal@coralgables.com" <colazabal@coralgables.com>, Coral Gables city <eriel@coralgables.com> Subject: Sommerset School To Whom it May Concern,</p> <p>Please do not bend or change the rules regarding zoning or re-zoning the property of the Baptist Church as is requested by Somerset School and the lawyers hired by Somerset.</p> <p>Please do not create a more congested traffic situation than already exists.</p> <p>Please keep our neighborhoods harmonious of business, government and citizens young, older and those growing older.</p> <p>We love our city beautiful, please govern to keep it as such.</p> <p>Thank you for your help and action.</p> <p>Patricia H. Clarke Julio M. Clarke 1001 Sunset Dr. Coral Gables, FL 33143</p>
116.	03 29 11	Marta Fernandez 170 Solano Prado Coral Gables, FL 33156			X	<p>From: marta fernandez [mailto:marticafernandez@mac.com] Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 9:42 AM To: Olazabal, Carmen</p>

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						<p>Subject: rezoning Coral Gables Church</p> <p>Dear Mr Colazabal: Im a resident of Coral Gables for over 30 years and I oppose the rezoning of the Congregational Church to expand the school to 900 students. I think that is the wrong area to have a school as large.</p> <p>Sincerely, Marta N Fernandez 170 Solano Prado Coral Gables, Fla 33156.</p>
117.	03 29 11	Sandra Pollack 1025 Anastasia Avenue Sandrajimpollack@aol.com			X ¹	<p>From: Sandrajimpollack@aol.com [mailto:Sandrajimpollack@aol.com] Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 10:43 AM To: Riel, Eric Subject: Fwd: PLease save our neighborhood</p> <p>I pray you will help my neighbors and my community.</p> <hr/> <p>From: Sandrajimpollack@aol.com To: colazabal@coralgables.com Sent: 3/29/2011 10:40:42 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time Subj: PLease save our neighborhood</p> <p>I have been living at 1025 Anastasia Avenue for more than 40 years. The traffic has only increased during these years and I can understand that progress has created this situation. However, we are homeowners and want to maintain some dignity and pride in our community.</p> <p>Somerset Academy requesting an increase for more than 700 students will create even more havoc with traffic. I now have to contend with ambulances going to Miami Childrens Hospital, city trucks maintaining the Biltmore golf course, Biltmore traffic with events, tour buses etc, school traffic, services and events from St Theresa and Coral Gables Community Church. At certain hours of the day I now have difficulty driving out of my driveway because of the traffic already on Anastasia.</p> <p>I can understand the need for the above but NOT for an additional school when we have Coral Gables Elementary and South Miami for students. I know education is important for our youth and I am all for it but a school increase in capacity or change of zoning for UBC is NOT the answer. There is not even a playground for students. The building was zoned for 107 students and changing that or any other change from a church will open the doors to anything being acceptable in our community.</p> <p>We have many other needs in this area such as a meeting place for Seniors, and that has already been taken away from us.</p>

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						I beg of you NOT to consider approval of any request in zoning changes for University Baptist Church and do NOT increase more traffic in an area where streets now have such high volume. (Segovia, Anastasia etc.) Help my neighbors any me, as residents of Coral Gables, to maintain some privacy and pride in our neighborhood. Thank you.
118.	03 29 11	Sandra Pollack 1025 Anastasia Avenue sandrajimpollack@aol.com			X ¹	<p>From: Sandrajimpollack@aol.com [mailto:Sandrajimpollack@aol.com] Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 10:41 AM To: Olazabal, Carmen Subject: PLease save our neighborhood</p> <p>I have been living at 1025 Anastasia Avenue for more than 40 years. The traffic has only increased during these years and I can understand that progress has created this situation. However, we are homeowners and want to maintain some dignity and pride in our community.</p> <p>Somerset Academy requesting an increase for more than 700 students will create even more havoc with traffic. I now have to contend with ambulances going to Miami Childrens Hospital, city trucks maintaining the Biltmore golf course, Biltmore traffic with events, tour buses etc, school traffic, services and events from St Theresa and Coral Gables Community Church. At certain hours of the day I now have difficulty driving out of my driveway because of the traffic already on Anastasia.</p> <p>I can understand the need for the above but NOT for an additional school when we have Coral Gables Elementary and South Miami for students. I know education is important for our youth and I am all for it but a school increase in capacity or change of zoning for UBC is NOT the answer. There is not even a playground for students. The building was zoned for 107 students and changing that or any other change from a church will open the doors to anything being acceptable in our community.</p> <p>We have many other needs in this area such as a meeting place for Seniors, and that has already been taken away from us.</p> <p>I beg of you NOT to consider approval of any request in zoning changes for University Baptist Church and do NOT increase more traffic in an area where streets now have such high volume. (Segovia, Anastasia etc.) Help my neighbors any me, as residents of Coral Gables, to maintain some privacy and pride in our neighborhood. Thank you.</p>
119.	03 29 11	Eric Jones Epjones123@aol.com			X	<p>From: Eric Jones [mailto:epjones123@aol.com] Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 11:47 AM To: Olazabal, Carmen Subject: Somerset</p> <p>I would like to go on record objecting to the zoning changes being offered by the Somerset school.</p>

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						Eric Jones Coral Gables
120.	03 29 11	Vivian Rosado 3235 Riviera Drive Coral Gables, FL lexlawvr@bellsouth.net			X	Despite the zoning of the property in question, it was Somerset's intent to have 700+ students at that location. Notwithstanding what Somerset says about the NON impact on the market values of the nearby homes or the NON impact of traffic on the neighborhood, I did not buy in this neighborhood to have a school operating at a 700+ capacity, and I urge you to NOT GRANT the Special Use requested by Somerset.
121.	03 29 11	Jose N. Palacios & Katherine Palacios 3416 Riviera Court Coral Gables, FL			X	We don't want more traffic & noise. This request for zoning change is just the ifrst of many requests and that means that if we don't stop it now, we'll be looking at a major problem/inconvenience down the road. There's plenty of land/properties outside Coral Gables where this and other academies can be set up.
122.	03 29 11	Hans & Sonia Viertl 730 Anastasia Avenue			X	In point "1" line 2 – you use the language ...pursuant to Small Scale amendment procedures... This is by no means a small amendment, this is an issue that will affect the lives of a neighborhood. How can one believe or imagine that the attendance of 735 students, staff, administration, security, kitchen etc. –would be a small scale impact on our daily lives – someoneis definitely living in a utopic world – Truly, I believe that you will do what is right for this neighborhood and oppose this change of land use & zoning.
123.	03 29 11	Kalle & Jane Patrick 1117 Castile Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 info@wisdomforwork.com			X	
124.	03 29 11	Frank Palmeri 820 Anastasia Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 frankapalmeri@aol.com			X	There is no need for such a large charter school which wil alter and compromise the historic and sensible zoning and character of this neighborhood.
125.	03 29 11	Judy Pruitt 827 Navarre Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 Jpruitt3rd@aol.com			X	Do not change the zoning!
126.	03 29 11	Linda L. Flores 4150 Monserrate Street Coral Gables, FL 33146 pagones@mac.com			X	
127.	03 29 11	Louise Petrine 611 San Juan Drive			X	
128.	03 29 11	Mary E. Burke 1243 Asturia Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 burkemarge@bellsouth.net			X	Do hereby object to zoning change.
129.	03 29 11	Louan Zagarino 731 Anastasia Avenue			X	I strongly object to any zoning change to the Comprehensive Plan of Coral Gables.

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		Coral Gables, FL 33134 louanzag@aol.com				
130.	03 29 11	Marta M. Fernandez 170 Solano Prado Coral Gables, FL 33156 marticafernandez@mac.com			X	Do not change the zoning.
131.	03 29 11	Barbara C. Bryant 520 Cadima Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134		X		I have had this home more than 20 years. When Dan Yeary was Pstor of the Baptist Church (with more than 4,000 members) there were a lot more cars at every church service. I am confident the neighborhood and the school will be able to work together.
132.	03 30 11	William & Mina P. Schultes 740 Escobar Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 Brokerbill796@gmail.com			X	Adamantly oppose! This will reduce property values in the area in addition increase both traffic and noise congestion.
133.	03 30 11	Elizabeth D. Cozced 1148 Alhambra Circle Coral Gables, FL 33134	X		X	
134.	03 30 11	Victoria M. Orr 829 Navarre Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 vmorr@att.net			X	
135.	03 30 11	Joseph A. Loesch 726 Santander Ave. Coral Gables, Florida Joseph.loesch123@gmail.com			X ¹	From: Joseph Loesch <joseph.loesch123@gmail.com> Date: March 30, 2011 5:04:51 PM GMT-04:00 To: eriel@coralgables.com Subject: Re: Somerset Academy Dear Mr. Riel: I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed expansion of the Somerset Academy. Such an expansion would have a serious negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and our quality of life. A school of the size requested by Somerset does not fit in the small space proposed in the middle of our residential neighborhood. The traffic patterns will greatly increase traffic in a quiet residential neighborhood, and not just during drop-off and pick-up times. School activities will certainly continue throughout the day and evening. Additionally, parking space at the UBC facility is limited and will likely not accommodate the staff and visitors to the school. This attempt to establish a "Community Services and Facilities" zone is a clear violation of the Restrictive Covenant signed in 1968 by the UBC that is supposed to be binding upon the successors to the trustees signing the Covenant. That Covenant indicates that the UBC is legally restricted from leasing church property for commercial purposes. Now UBC wishes to break that Covenant expressly for commercial purposes.

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Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
						<p>Somerset could and should find another location elsewhere in a more appropriate section of town.</p> <p>This "Community Services and Facilities Zone" is a unique, creative, designation that UBC and Somerset blatantly wish to devise for their own special purposes. I urge you to VOTE NO and stop this attempted violation of the Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan and save our neighborhood.</p> <p>Regards, Joseph A. Loesch 726 Santander Ave. Coral Gables, Florida</p>
136.	03 30 11	Janet Q. Festinger			X	<p>From: Janet Festinger <jqf616@bellsouth.net> To: Olazabal, Carmen Sent: Wed Mar 30 17:39:38 2011 Subject: Somerset School</p> <p>This is very unfair for the neighbors in the area. The Gables cannot forget what has made thie community so desirable Janet Q. Festinger</p>
137.	03 30 11	Joseph A. Loesch 726 Santander Avenue Coral Gables, FL Joseph.loeach123@gmail.com			X ¹	<p>From: Joseph Loesch <joseph.loesch123@gmail.com> To: Olazabal, Carmen Sent: Wed Mar 30 17:03:55 2011 Subject: Re: Somerset Academy</p> <p>Dear Ms. Olazabal:</p> <p>I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed expansion of the Somerset Academy. Such an expansion would have a serious negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and our quality of life.</p> <p>A school of the size requested by Somerset does not fit in the small space proposed in the middle of our residential neighborhood. The traffic patterns will greatly increase traffic in a quiet residential neighborhood, and not just during drop-off and pick-up times. School activities will certainly continue throughout the day and evening. Additionally, parking space at the UBC facility is limited and will likely not accommodate the staff and visitors to the school.</p> <p>This attempt to establish a "Community Services and Facilities" zone is a clear violation of the Restrictive Covenant signed in 1968 by the UBC that is supposed to be binding upon the successors to the trustees signing the Covenant. That Covenant indicates that the UBC is legally restricted from leasing church property for commercial purposes. Now UBC wishes to break that Covenant expressly for commercial purposes.</p> <p>Somerset could and should find another location elsewhere in a more appropriate section of town.</p>

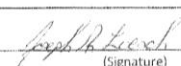
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Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
						<p>This "Community Services and Facilities Zone" is a unique, creative, designation that UBC and Somerset blatantly wish to devise for their own special purposes. I urge you to VOTE NO and stop this attempted violation of the Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan and save our neighborhood.</p> <p>Regards, Joseph A. Loesch 726 Santander Ave. Coral Gables, Florida</p>
138.	03 30 11	Janet Nostro 728 Catalonia Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 nostro@comcast.net			X	<p>March 31, 2011 I, Janet Miller Nostro, 728 Catalonia Avenue, Coral Gables, FL nostro@comcast.net</p> <p>I do hereby object to the proposed change in land use for the property at University Baptist Church. Although I understand the need to expand public schooling options in Coral Gables, University Baptist Church is not the proper location. Not only is the church in a quiet residential area, the facility itself is not conducive to handle 735 students without extreme hardship to the surrounding neighborhood.</p> <p>In comparison, Coral Gables Preparatory Academy, formerly known as Coral Gables Elementary, has 608 students. Likewise, George Washington Carver located east of the highway in the Gables has 528 students and Henry S. West Laboratory School located next to the UM campus has 231 students. Each of these schools is situated on a tract of land on a major thoroughfare with ample parking for both parents and staff. Each school has a safe pick-up and drop-off system which does not hinder the surrounding neighborhood.</p> <p>The mega school proposed by Somerset would be far larger than any of the other existing public schools in the Gables. It has none of the attributes that the existing public schools have and should not be located on this site.</p> <p>A school of this magnitude simply does not belong in our quiet residential neighborhood.</p> <p>Certainly, there are plenty of properties in the urban core of the city where a school of this magnitude could be located. The Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Board would be wise to look to the past and adhere to the spirit of the 1977 measure which capped enrollment at 110 students at University Baptist Church.</p> <p>Janet Nostro 728 Catalonia Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 305-444-1625 Nostro@comcast.net</p>

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Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
139.	03 31 11	Joe Loesch Joseph.loesch123@gmail.com			X	<p>Sirs: Please find attached the Comment Form objecting to the expansion of the Somerset Charter School. Thank you, Joe Loesch</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p align="center">City of Coral Gables Courtesy Public Hearing Notice Comment Form</p> <p align="center">Application: 07-10-113-P</p> <p align="center">Request: Change of Land Use, Conditional Use and Site Plan Review - Somerset Grace Academy Charter School</p> <p align="center">Location: 624 Anastasia Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida</p> </div> <p>Date: <u>31 March</u>, 2011</p> <p>I, or We, <u>Joseph A. Loesch / Tang Mui Lee</u></p> <p>Mailing address: <u>726 Santander Ave, Coral Gables, Florida 33134</u></p> <p>Email <u>joseph.loesch123@gmail.com</u></p> <p>Please provide any comments below (attach additional pages as necessary):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have no comment, or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do not object to this application, or</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do hereby object.</p> <p>We are opposed to the proposed expansion of the Somerset Academy. Such an expansion would have a serious negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and our quality of life. A school of the size requested by Somerset does not fit in the small space proposed in the middle of our residential neighborhood. The traffic patterns will greatly increase traffic in a quiet residential neighborhood, and not just during drop-off and pick-up times. School activities will certainly continue throughout the day and evening. Additionally, parking space at the UBC facility is limited and will likely not accommodate the staff and visitors to the school.</p> <p>This attempt to establish a "Community Services and Facilities" zone is a clear violation of the Restrictive Covenant signed by the UBC in 1968 that is supposed to be binding upon the successors to the trustees signing the Covenant. That Covenant indicates that the UBC is legally restricted from leasing church property for commercial purposes. Now UBC wishes to break that Covenant expressly for commercial purposes. Somerset could and should find another location elsewhere in a more appropriate section of town.</p> <p>This "Community Services and Facilities Zone" is a unique, creative, designation that UBC and Somerset blatantly wish to devise for their own special purposes. Please stop this attempted violation of the Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan and save our neighborhood.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  (Signature) </div> <p>Sincerely, <i>Planning Department</i> City of Coral Gables, Florida</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p align="center">Return this form to the somersetcharterschoolcomments@coralgables.com or the Planning Department 405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134 - Fax: 305/460-5327</p> </div>

1 Comments are duplicate comments provided to various parties.

Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
140.	03 31 11	Carla Crossno crossno@unitedwaymiami.org		X		<p>March 31, 2011</p> <p>Dear Friend,</p> <p>I am writing in support of Somerset Gables. As a resident of Coral Gables with school-aged children, I consider the issue of education to be paramount—and the one that will be the basis on which I will vote in the coming election.</p> <p>The public education options in Coral Gables, and beyond, are currently insufficient for demand. As an example, my son, Tommy Gillette was placed 185th and 233rd on waiting lists during the kindergarten magnet application process last year, at Henry West Lab and Ada Merritt, respectively. This year, we are again on a waiting list, this time at Sunset Elementary and Ada Merritt for first grade. Unfortunately, I do not know his place on those waiting lists, but nonetheless, another anxious cycle is taking its course with an unknown outcome.</p> <p>Beyond the magnet application process, we participated in the Gables controlled choice process last year and were placed on the waiting list at Sunset. Ultimately, Tommy did not receive a slot at Sunset and we were directed to Carver Elementary. Unfortunately, the educational offering and test scores at Carver are not comparable to those at Sunset. As a result, my husband and I placed our son at a private school so that he could have a rich educational experience.</p> <p>While this is my personal story, this is an angst-ridden scenario playing out at homes across the Gables and our broader community.</p> <p>You may be asking yourself why this matters to you. It should matter to you for a couple of reasons.</p> <p>o If families with school-aged children cannot find acceptable primary education for their children—in sufficient quantity to meet demand—in the Gables, they will seek these options elsewhere. In places like Pinecrest, Key Biscayne and Coconut Grove, where controlled choice lotteries do not dictate the educational fate of their children. Or perhaps they will leave Florida all together, seeking a locale with both good educational options and more affordable housing. In either case, the Gables will lose mid-career, tax paying residents. This means fewer families will sell first homes to buy bigger homes in the Gables—fewer people will be eating in Gables restaurants, fewer will frequent local shops.</p> <p>o Our collective future is dependent on our ability to educate ALL of our children. Not just yours, not just mine, ALL children. If one out of three children do not graduate from high school this will affect all of us. If you are a homeowner, it means fewer buyers that will ever be interested in purchasing your home. If you are a business owner, it means fewer customers will ever buy your product or service. Perhaps it also means that your home and business are more vulnerable to crime, because if individuals in our community</p>

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Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

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					<p>do not have high quality options throughout their school-aged years, they may become financially unstable and may make destructive or criminal decisions in the future—and your family or your business may be a victim of their acts. Beyond the negative, a community is comprised of not just folks that have lived here for twenty years, but those that arrived a few years, months or days ago. The needs and aspirations of all members of the community matter.</p> <p>Gables residents look to our elected officials to consider the needs of all community members—from the most senior to the most youthful. A strong, accessible, educational system is critical to making Coral Gables and Miami world class. A city can be beautiful, but it must also be strong. Charming buildings and well landscaped roundabouts do not make a city robust—nor do they ensure the future of a place. Education has always been the path to prosperity. Perhaps a corollary is that lack of education leads to poverty. This can apply to individuals and to a city.</p> <p>Make a decision to allow more children to have access to high quality education here in Coral Gables.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because you believe offering ample slots in high quality schools is a moral imperative.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because you think it makes business sense today and in the future.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because a little bit of traffic congestion is a worthwhile tradeoff for a vibrant city to attract and retain residents with school-aged children.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because people buy homes in areas that offer high quality educational options and that are secure.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because your son needs a place to go to school.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because your grand-daughter deserves the best opportunity to live up to her inherent potential.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do it because you went into public service to help people you know AND people you don't.</p> <p>For our children, our city and our collective future, vote to allow more children to have access to high quality education here in Coral Gables.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Carla Crossno Mother, Coral Gables resident and tax-payer, Voter</p> <p>Carla Crossno Senior Director</p>

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Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
						<p>United Way of Miami-Dade 3250 SW 3rd Avenue Miami, FL 33129 305.646.7012 305.338.1735 (cell)</p>
141.	03 31 11	Lainie Suarez Butler 3620 Toledo Street Coral Gables, FL 33134 Lainie.suarezbutler@gmail.com		X		<p>Dear Mayor and Commissioners,</p> <p>I was born and raised in Miami/Coral Gables attended college in Pennsylvania and lived in NYC for 12 years. Growing up, my parents always strived to give me the best education that money could buy. At the time (right or wrong), there was a belief that spending money guaranteed you a great education. I left Miami to attend college at Villanova University where I realized that many of my peers never went to private school. I have to admit this seemed odd to me. However, I quickly learned that my peers were just as well or even better prepared than I was for a difficult college curriculum. My husband went to public school his entire childhood. He received a fantastic education scored well on his entrance exams and was extremely successful academically at Villanova. He's opened my eyes to truly believe that a public education can and should work for our kids. Times have changed and many new parents of my generation can't easily pay for a private education the way our parents did for us especially when we are saving for growing college tuition costs. Where does this leave us?</p> <p>After college, I spent 12 years living in various neighborhoods within NYC. I always knew that I wanted to return to Coral Gables to raise my family and in 2008 I finally convinced my husband that it was time. We spent 18 months living with my parents because we were looking for that perfect home in the perfect neighborhood. The perfect neighborhood means to me having excellent public school options. However, I have learned that this concept does not really exist in Coral Gables. I remain shocked about how different things are here vs NYC. In NYC, it is known that the hardest neighborhoods to live in (most expensive) are those with the best schools. This is not a coincidence. We need to move beyond feeling that private school is the only option for our kids or the controlled choice which, as we all know, is not much of a choice at all but rather where you end up being placed.</p> <p>My son's name is Hugo. He is entering Kindergarten next year. The other kids from his small Montessori know where they will be going to school next year. My son keeps asking me and I just don't have an answer for him.</p> <p>I urge the city commission to vote in favor of a significant expansion of Somerset Gables. We live a 1/2 mile away from the school and truly believe that its an excellent idea to have a well managed school just steps away. To continue to attract young families to Coral Gables, the city needs to put education first.</p> <p>Kind regards, Lainie Suarez Butler</p>

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Proposed Somerset Grace Academy Charter School Public Hearing Comments

	Date Received	Name and Address	No comment	No objection	Object	Comments (Verbatim)
						3620 Toledo Street Coral Gables, FL 33134 (917) 623-4597
142.	03 31 11	James / Lisa Marie Platsk 732 Santener Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 lisamarie@upsidethinking.com			X	Do hereby object!!
143.	03 31 11	Andrea and Linda Urrea 743 Anastasia Avenue Coral Gables, FL 33134 Andrea@lolaw.net			X	<p>The changes requested by Somerset are not warranted or justified by any changes in the subject neighborhood.</p> <p>This neighborhood is the same that it was at its inception, in 1968 when the (illegible) were written in 1977 when the City ordinance was passed.</p> <p>To know the proposed changes and introduce for the very first time the "community facility" designation in the City, is not only unnecessary but unconscionable and catering to private interests.</p>

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